

The meeting of the Chatham Township Environmental Commission convened at 7:15 pm on Tuesday, September 2, 2014 at the Township Municipal Building. In attendance were CTEC members Steve Carroll, Mike Kelly, Frank Esposito, Dot Stillinger and Township Committee Liaison Curt Ritter. Absent: Marilyn Murray, Matt Palmer and Don Travisano

CTEC'S PURPOSE: To undertake projects and make recommendations concerning the protection or use of natural resources, including water resources and air quality, located within or directly affecting Chatham Township.

The Chatham Township Environmental Commission's goal is to provide a responsible environmental viewpoint to Township committees and boards and to undertake projects with a strong educational component in order to inform officials and residents about constructive actions that can be taken to preserve the environment.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT -- The meeting schedule for 2014 and January 2015 is posted on the main bulletin board at the Township municipal building and on the Chatham Township website at www.chathamtownship.org. The public is cordially invited to attend all meetings, join the discussions and participate in projects.

CTEC AND GREEN TEAM MEETING DATES FOR 2014 AND JANUARY 2015

Every first Tuesday February through December 2014 and the second Tuesday in January 2015.

February 4, March 4, April 1, May 6, June 3, July NO MEETING, August 5 (cancelled), September 2, October 7, November 4, December 2 in 2014 and January 13 in 2015.

Roll Call

Frank Esposito motioned to approve the June 2, 2014 CTEC and Green Team minutes and Steve Carroll 2nd, with all in favor.

RESIGNATION OF MEGAN SCHAFF

Megan is leaving to work on more projects for the Newcomers Club. Her work on the EC, especially on recycling, is deeply appreciated. You will be missed, Megan. Rejoin us at any time, and good luck!

GREEN TEAM MEETING (7:26-8:02 pm)

Reviewed preliminary actions to consider for Sustainable Jersey points for 2016. Planning Board has adopted the NRI as an element of the Master Plan as required for 20 SJ points. Green Fair September 20, will participate, Steve, Frank and Mike will volunteer. Prescription drug drop off program to be held, date and specifics to be decided upon, this is a new Sustainable action that will receive points. S. Carroll, Green Team Chair and CTEC Vice Chair.

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

Laura Kelm, Director of Water Quality Programs for the Great Swamp Watershed Association, and a group of volunteers on July 8 collected and removed approximately 25 bags of trash from along the trails in the Green Village Pond Conservation Area and kept the invasive Japanese barberry from taking over the footpath. The trash bags were later picked up by the Chatham Disposal Company, a long-time supporter of CTEC.

Steve Gruber, environmentalist and volunteer for The Great Swamp Watershed Association and the Raptor Trust, seeing the potential of the Green Village Pond Conservation Area, removed trash, cleared vegetation near the trail and improved the footpath all the way to the far stream.

Zachary Atkins, Eagle Scout, completed a trail improvement project on the trail on the Green Village Pond Conservation Area. He improved the footpath to the pond, cleared vegetation, installed boardwalk over several swampy areas and put in a bench by the pond. CTEC is extremely grateful to Andrew for carrying out this project for the benefit of all residents of the Township.

Andrew Sisk, Eagle Scout, has accomplished a work project on the trail on the Green Village Pond Conservation Area. He refurbished the trail head and the trail down to the fence, purchased a colorful sign to be used in addition to the sign that is there (not in lieu of), included trail blazes to replace the tape, added a short extension out to the road, improved the footpath, and cleared vegetation. CTEC is extremely grateful to Andrew for carrying out this project for the benefit of all residents of the Township.

TREE PROJECT

The township owns the remaining 25 trees from the spring 2013 Sapling Sale which are being kept at the Morris Township nursery of the Morris County Soils Conservation District. The intent was to plant them on public land, and the Middle School,

which has requested two trees, certainly qualifies for that. There is a time factor, the township has to plant the trees within 2 years of the Sapling Sale (the time period will expire next spring) or we lose them. The best planting time is the spring; second best is the fall. CTEC discussed and decided to plan for a community event “adopt a tree planting” to be held in the spring. Trees provide many benefits including environmental, economic, social and communal.

APPLICATION/ENVIRONMENTAL PERMIT REVIEW

- Approved memo previously sent to NJDEP re application for General Permit on a property on Loantaka Lane South.
- GOLDEN RIVER HOMES, LLC, 11 SUNSET DRIVE, BLOCK: 61 LOT: 16. Complete 6/13/2014. Application to the Board of Adjustment for steep slope variance. The lot is vacant and slopes steeply down toward Fairmount Ave. Approved memo sent to Board of Adjustment on August 20.
- INNOVATIVE CONSTRUCTION & DESIGN, LLC, 51 MOUNTAIN AVENUE, BLOCK: 37 LOTS 12 & 14. April 22, 2014. Application to the Planning Board for minor subdivision with front yard setback variances. Proposal to adjust the lot line between the parcels, demolish the existing house and build two new houses. This property is near the Bernardo/Majmudar parcel which has been the subject of litigation for many years. The slopes in that area are very steep. A conservation easement on the slopes on another nearby property was violated to excess. At the suggestion of CTEC and of planner Frank Banisch the Planning Board required a conservation easement on the steepest slopes. Approved memo sent to the Planning Board on August 4.

REPORTS

- Planning Board, D. Travisano.
- Township Committee – Fall newsletter going out. Two new police officers have been hired. Great Swamp celebrating 50 year anniversary of the National Wilderness Act on September 3, 2014. C. Ritter, Township Committee liaison.
- Open Space Committee
Progress has been made for the purchase of Giralda property. M. Kelly, Open Space Committee liaisons.
- Communications Committee
Archive page on EC website is an excellent resource, serves as backup for important files. Township website has been updated and problems addressed with the CTEC website. Any EC member wanting to post material on the EC website should forward the items to F. Esposito who will work with Township Web Master Tom Salvas. F. Esposito, Chair.
- Recycling Committee – MUA has concerns with wet recycling received from Tanglewood. Recycling that is wet from rain and snow is an issue with the companies that MUA contract with. MUA might require that Tanglewood cover their bins. F. Esposito, as CTEC recycling chair, contacts Township and County recycling officials to obtain information and bring it back to the EC for discussion.
MUA tonnage reports show that recycling has increased 1%. Numbers are not growing. Increasing awareness in recycling is necessary. Frank will be addressing two condo associations about recycling. F. Esposito, Chair.
- Community Education and Outreach Committee.
CTEC receives several e-mails every day. F. Esposito responds and archives the messages. M. Kelly and F. Esposito, Chair.
- Conservation Easement Subcommittee
 - Conservation easements on 4 properties on River Road, including the one on the Greeve property, need to be recorded and accepted. Planning Board final subdivision approval was granted 3-21-96 conditioned that a conservation easement on all four new parcels had to be granted to the Township. Developer was Nick Parisi.
 - CTEC should pursue a mechanism for conservation easement monitoring and recording.
 - Lot grading plan is being revised to include more protection for conservation easements.
- Invasive Species Subcommittee
 - Nils Klarlund reported invasive plant species on his slope on River Road. New Jersey has an invasive species strike force (www.njisst.org) which is mapping invasive species and looking for volunteers.

NOTES AND DISCUSSION

- What is the Township position on keeping bees? Bees are becoming stressed. Note that the Morris County Mosquito Commission routinely sprays Bti from airplanes on many waterbodies in the county.
- Bears have been sighted on Huron Drive. Bear workshop was held in November. EC bear education project? Update NRI with a section on bears?

- New and very good NJDEP website for maps, parcels and environmental information at NJ-GeoWeb, <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/gis/geoweb splash.htm>. Use Internet Explorer, not Chrome.
- Very good Morris County mapping utility at <http://morrisgisapps.co.morris.nj.us/apps/parcelsearcher.html>. Gives information about each parcel and has aerials layer.
- Discussion about requiring subdivision and site plans and related documents to be submitted in pdf format. If that happens CTEC should be on the list to receive all pdf plans and documents. Currently the township requires applicants to submit 25 paper copies of every sheet and document, which amounts to a large stack of paper and is costly for the applicant.
- Possible projects for grants.
- Waiting for the report card from Joe Dunn of the Morris County Soil Conservation District (www.mcsd.org/) on how Chatham Township is doing on its soil and sediment erosion control. Chatham Township, by means of its lot grading plan requirement, is one of four Morris County towns that assumes the responsibility for soil and erosion management instead of leaving it to the county.
- Note alternatives being proposed for Comprehensive Conservation Plan for Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. The word on the street is that Option B is most favored. Public meetings were held in June. Read the Plan at <http://www.fws.gov/northeast/planning/Great%20Swamp/ccphome.html>.

RECENT LETTERS SENT

- August 2014. Memo to Board of Adjustment concerning variances needed for steep slopes on a property on Sunset Drive. Memo to Planning Board concerning development on steep slopes on a property on Mountain Avenue. Letter of thanks to Chatham Disposal Company for pickup of trash from a workday on the Green Village Pond Conservation Area on July 8.
- June 2014. Memo to NJDEP concerning wetlands permits for a property on Loantaka Lane South.
- April 2014. Memo to NJDEP concerning application for an LOI on Ferndale Road. Memo to Planning Board suggesting a conservation easement be obtained on steep slopes on a subdivision on Longview Road.
- March 2014. Memo to Planning Board urging adoption of Natural Resources Inventory as a section of the Conservation Element of the Master Plan.
- January 2014. Memo to Board of Adjustment concerning violation of conservation easement on steep slopes on a property on Susan Drive, memo to NJDEP urging an applicant for subdivision on Shunpike Road to obtain an LOI.

EVENTS

- Thursday October 9, 2014, Friday October 10, 2014, Passaic River Symposium VI, Intersecting Priorities, Organized by the Passaic River Institute of Montclair State University, Montclair State University Conference Center, 1 Normal Avenue, Montclair, NJ. About \$60 if you identify yourself as an EC member. Note that any group can host a short workshop on their topic of interest. <http://www.montclair.edu/csam/passaic-river-institute/conferences-symposiums>.
- Friday, October 24, 2014. 9-4:30. ANJEC annual environmental congress. Raritan Valley Community College, Branchburg. Keynote Speaker - Former Governor Tom Kean. Cost: usually around \$70. Info at anjec.org.

MAIL RECEIVED

- Minutes of meetings of Long Hill and Chatham Borough Environmental Commissions.
- Notices and flyers.

ADJOURN 8:45

Carolyn Scannelli